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BEGINNERS   LII: Legal Information Institute

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LII
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"Search engines and ranking systems identify the LII as the most linked to web resource in the field of law... A Google search on most law topics will lead straight to the LII. (See, for example, a search on "employment discrimination law".) <http://www.google.com/search? hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&oe =UTF-8&q=employment+discrimination+ law>" [1]

Cornell Law School's Legal Information Institute was the first law website on the Internet and they developed one of the first Web browsers, Cello. The staff of LII continues to be innovative today. [2]

It quickly became the leading site for distribution of Supreme Court opinions and later added decisions of the New York Court of Appeals. Over the years, it published a host of significant legal documents on the Web, including the U.S. Code, the Federal Rules of Evidence and Civil Procedure, and the Constitution. [3]

Their homepage at: <http:// www.law.cornell.edu/> contains links to their major collections, a search engine and the Spotlight, which highlights the LII and Law Events in the News.

To illustrate the inclusiveness of the site I chose Children's Rights from a long list of "Law About…" topics at: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/topics/ topic2.html#law%20practice%20and% 20legal%20education>. The left side of the screen contains an overview of the topic, while the right side contains a "Menu of Sources." The sources for Children's rights listed **Federal Material** including Federal Statutes with the appropriate USC citations, Federal Judicial Decisions from the U.S. Supreme Court and the U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeals; **State Material** including both statutes and judicial decisions; **International Material** including Conventions and Treaties; and a long list of **Other Resources**.

A timely additional service is the LII's series of bulletins on the latest rulings by the Supreme Court and the New York State District Court and legal developments on specific topics. The LII uses its own software to monitor a direct feed from the Supreme Court and automatically place court decisions on the web in searchable format within minutes of their being handed down. The software also assembles the court's decision summaries into an e-mail bulletin, which (after a final check by Bruce or Martin) is sent to over 20,000 subscribers worldwide. [4]

INTERMEDIATE   OS Upgrade??

However, should you upgrade all of your computers to Windows XP? The answer to this loaded question is the typical lawyer's response: It depends.

I cited this column by Jeff Beard in our blog on February 2, 2004, but I am reprinting a lot of it again because it is a very good article, I don't know how many of you are reading our blog <http://temp.starklawlibrary.org/blog/> on a regular basis, and I don't want you to miss this!

The Wizard of OS: Should You Upgrade?

Microsoft Windows 9x (95, 98, ME, and their sub-versions) have been around for a long time. Probably the most successful, and relatively stable of the bunch was Windows 98 Second Edition. In business and home use, it is arguably the best of the 9x series. However, it's over five years old, and in computer doggie years, that makes it fairly ancient. Add to the fact that Microsoft has already begun phasing out support for Windows 98, and it raises some tough questions.

However, should you upgrade all of your computers to Windows XP? The answer to this loaded question is the typical lawyer's response: **It depends.**

An Operating System (OS) upgrade cannot be considered in a vacuum. There are practical hardware requirements, software application considerations, and the fact that OS upgrades are often the tail that wags the IT budget dog. If you upgrade an OS to one that is several generations newer, oftentimes it will cost much more than the OS upgrade to get new hardware capable of running it, plus obtaining new programs, peripherals, and their associated drivers that will work with the new OS.

Here to help answer that question are two good TechRepublic articles which nicely illustrate both sides of the coin:
- **Top Five Reasons to Leave Windows 9x Behind** <http://techrepublic.com.com/5100-6270-5034539.html>
- **Do More With Less: Reasons Why Windows 98 is Still a Good Choice** <http://techrepublic.com.com/5100-6270-5136887.html?tag=e101>

For business use, I still lean towards Windows XP upgrades because of the enhanced stability, and the fact that you are buying into longer overall support -- Windows XP won't be replaced until Longhorn comes out in 2006, so there's virtually no chance Microsoft is going to phase out support for Windows XP any time soon. This also means that software vendors will need to support it for some time yet. Also, if you are considering doing any type of networking between two or more computers, whether it's wired Ethernet or Wi-Fi, I strongly recommend paying the extra money for Windows XP Professional over the Home edition. The difference is usually less than $100 and the enhanced networking support will more than pay itself back in saved time. However, if you have critical legacy software or hardware that you must continue to use for whatever reason, then an XP upgrade may generate some serious challenges that require savvy planning and implementation talent. If your application program versions are mostly up-to-date, then an XP upgrade may not be too painful.

INTERMEDIATE   **OS Upgrade??** (Continued)

Windows 98 SE is still a good home and SOHO computer OS for people with older hardware. Let's face it, if most of your tasks are related to running Corel WordPerfect or Microsoft Office coupled with Internet access (most notably, web surfing and e-mail), some light printing and graphical tasks, and some miscellaneous fun, then you don't need a lot of CPU power to get by for a little while longer. Windows XP will choke on some slower processors with less memory installed.

Lest one wonders why on earth I would be discussing Windows 98 when most new computers have been shipping with either Windows 2000 or XP for several years now: I still know a lot of people who run Windows 98 on their home PC, as well as solo and small firm practitioners who are just trying to get by with what they have. Hopefully, this post will help them determine where they want to go both today and tomorrow. [5]

Jeff Beard is an Attorney and Legal Technology Consultant in Milwaukee, WI. He also serves on the ABA TECHSHOW® 2004 Advisory Board, and is a frequent national author and presenter on legal technology and practice management topics. Jeff has consulted with over 100 law firms and corporate counsel on a wide range of technology and business management needs.

Jeff also designed and operates the highly acclaimed "LawTech Guru" site <www.lawtechguru.com>. This popular weblog is dedicated to alerting and educating the legal market on savvy Internet and legal technology use, mobile computing, strategic planning, and law practice management issues.

ADVANCED   **International Law Resources - Revisited**

I don't have much room left, but I have a lot of sites I want to bring to your attention so I'm going to list as many sites as I can with no commentary.

General Articles:
- Evaluating Foreign and International Legal Databases on the Internet <http://www.llrx.com/features/evaluating2.htm>
- Guide to Foreign and International Legal Databases <http://www.law.nyu.edu/library/foreign_intl/>

- International Law Dictionary & Directory <http://august1.com/pubs/dict/>
- Legal Research on International Law Issues Using the Internet <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/~llou/forintlaw.html>
- Sources of International and Foreign Law in English <http://library.law.uiuc.edu/sub/for_ljw2.htm>

Individual Sites:
- CODICES <http://codices.coe.int/>
- Ecolex <http://www.ecolex.org/>

ADVANCED International Law Resources - Continued

- Electronic Information System for International Law (EISIL) <http://www.eisil.org/>
- Elexica <http://www.elexica.com/index.htm>
- Foreign Government Resources <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/doemoff/gov_foreign.html>
- Global Banking Law Database <http://www.gbld.org/>
- Global E-Law Alert <http://www.bmck.com/elaw/>
- Global Lawyers and Physicians <http://www.glphr.org/>
- Global Legal Information Network <http://www.loc.gov/law/glin/>
- International Agreements Database <https://ostiweb.osti.gov/iaem/>
- International Justice <http://www.globalpolicy.org/wldcourt/index.htm>
- Juris International <http://www.jurisint.org/pub/>
- NATLEX <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home>
- World Legal Information Institute (LII) <http://www.worldlii.org/> [6]

FOOTNOTES

[1] "The Legal Information Institute - A Quick Overview." LII Legal Information Institute. <http://www.law.cornell.edu/lii.html>

[2 & 3] Ambrogi, Robert J. "Web Watch: The 10 Best Sites of the Decade." Law Technology News. 4 December 2003. Law Technology News. 12 February 2004. <http://www.lawtechnews.com/r5/showkiosk.asp?listing_id=414691&category _id=27902>

[4] Myers, Linda. "CU Law Institute Web Site Has Latest Legal Information, from Miranda to Elian." Cornell Chronicle. 27 April 2000. Cornell University. 12 February 2004. <http://www.news.cornell.edu/Chronicle/00/4.27.00/Legal_Info_Inst.html>.

[5] Beard, Jeff. "The Wizard of OS: Should You Upgrade?" 2 February 2004. LawTech Guru Blog by Jeff Beard, 12 February 2004. <http://www.lawtechguru.com/archives/2004/02/02_the_wizard_of_os_should_you_upgrade.html>

[6] "Legal Research Guide: International Law and Country Studies." The Virtual Chase. Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP. 13 February 2004. <http://www.virtualchase.com/resources/international.shtml>

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